DR. BIMAL JALAN: Sir, we have three, four different objectives in the agricultural field. One is food security, second is public distribution and the third is transfer of people from agriculture to other areas. Sir, my question to the hon. Minister through the Chair is simply this. Are we planning to have a separate discussion on this, because I don't think we can resolve these contradictory objectives in the field of agriculture, which is the most important, without a more intense discussion on various alternatives which are available to us?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: It is a very important issue. We are ready to resolve these issues. I have no objection for a discussion if the hon. Chairman permits and gives a specific time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will see to it.

Expansion of RINL

*184. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:†
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission has approved the expansion plan for Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. (RINL) to increase its production from the present 3 1/2 million tonnes to 7 million tonnes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are seriously thinking of merging RINL with SAIL;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether any consultations with State Government and the major political parties of the State have been held; and

(f) if so, what are Government's views thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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*The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati N.P. Durga.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Planning Commission has recommended the expansion plan of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited. (RINL) to increase its production capacity from the existing 3 million tonnes of Liquid Steel to 6.3 million tonnes. The salient features of the expansion plan are as under:

(i) Provision of a new Blast Furnace of 3800 cum capacity for additional 2.5 MT production of hot metal.

(ii) provision of two additional converters each of 150 cum capacity and two 6-strand billet casters in addition to one 6 strand round caster in SMS-2.

(iii) Facilities regarding desulphurization of hot metal, second ladle furnace, RH Unit in Steel Melt Shop-I (SMS-i) and Electromagnetic Stirrers in Continuous Casting Machine (CCM).

(iv) Installation of 2 nos. of vertical shaft kilns of 500 tpd capacity in Calcining Plant.

(v) Installation of 3 nos. 67.5 MW turbo generator on Build Own Operate (BOO) basis in Captive Power Plant.

(vi) Independent re-circulating systems with cooling towers, pump houses and treatment units.

(vii) Installation of 2x650 tpd Air Separation Plant in expansion stage on BOO basis to take care of additional requirement of oxygen.

(viii) The proposed construction schedule will be 36 months from the date of approval when all major process units are completed including Wire Rod Mill (WRM) and Seamless Pipe Mill. The special Bar Mill and Structural Mill will be commissioned within 48 months from the date of approval.

(c) and (d) There is no formal proposal at present for merger of RINL with SAIL.

(e) and (f) Informal consultations have been held with the Andhra Pradesh Government who are opposed to the basic concept of merger of RINL with SAIL.

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Sir, at the outset, I am very grateful to the hon. Minister for his positive reply which says that there is no proposal for merger of the RINL with the SAIL. At the same time, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to when the Planning Commission recommended for Vizag Steel Plant's expansion, and what are the reasons for delay in placing it before the Cabinet for its approval. Because, even after the approval, it takes three to four years for completing all major process units and ultimately start the additional production to reach the target of 6.3 million tonnes.

श्री राम विलास पासवान: सभापति जी, यह सारा प्रोसेस पूरा हो गया है और इस माह के अंदर कैबिनेट में बैठकर निर्णय ले लिया जाएगा।

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Sir, my second supplementary is, I would like to know from the hon. Minister how much financial assistance the Government of India is giving for the vizag Steel Plant's expansion programme, and what is the percentage of increase in liquid steel, what is the percentage of increase in finished steel and what is the percentage of increase in saleable steel production after the expansion of the RINL.

श्री राम विलास पासवान: सभापति जी, आर.आई.एन.एल. का इंटरनल रिसोर्सेज इतना अच्छा हो गया है कि केंद्र सरकार के बजटरी सपोर्ट या किसी और तरह की सहायता की आवश्यकता नहीं है। कुल मिलाकर 8,259 करोड़ रुपए एक्सपेंशन की इसमें लागत आएगी। हमने जैसा बतलाया है कि इसमें हॉट मेटल की कैपेसिटी है, यह 4 मिलियन टन की है। इसे बढ़ाने का लक्ष्य 2.5 मिलियन टन का है, तो 2007-08 तक यह टोटल 6.8 मिलियन टन हो जाएगा। लिक्विड स्टील की क्षमता 3 मिलियन टन की है, इसके उत्पादन का लक्ष्य 2007-08 में 6.3 मिलियन टन का रखा गया है। सिस्टर प्लान्ट हैं, अभी दो हैं, अभी एक और लगेगा। जो ब्लास्ट फर्नेस हैं, अभी दो हैं, इसमें अभी एक और एक्स्ट्रा लगेगा। जो स्टील मेल्टिंग शॉप है, इसमें एक एसएमएस है, इसमें एल.डी. कन्वेनर तीन हैं, एक एस एम एस और लगेगा, जो बायलक्ट कास्टर अभी नहीं है। अभी ब्लूम कास्टर 6 हैं, दो बिलैट कॉस्टर्स आएंगे, अभी राउंड कास्टर नहीं हैं, इसमें एक राउंड कास्टर भी आएगा, अभी रोलिंग यूनिट्स 3 हैं इसमें अभी चार आएंगे। फर्स्ट फेज में दो लगेंगे और सैकिण्ड फेज में दो और किए जाएंगे।

SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what are the advantages of the proposal for merger of the RINL and the SAIL, and why Andhra Pradesh Government has opposed this move. What are the reasons of it?

श्री राम विलास पासवान: सभापति जी, असल में हम लोगों को एक आइडिया आया था, वह आइडिया यह था कि जितने भी स्टील मेकिंग प्लान्ट्स हैं, उन सभी को एक जगह इकट्ठा क्यों नहीं किया जाता है, उस संबंध में पी.एम.ओ. में एक बैठक 3 जून को हुई थी। सेल अवश्य चाहता है कि आर.आई.एन.एल. के साथ उसका मर्जर हो जाए, लेकिन आर.आई.एन.एल. और आंध्र प्रदेश की सरकार ने, पहले जो डिसिजन लिए हैं, उनका विरोध किया है कि हम इसका मर्जर नहीं चाहते हैं। आर.आई.एन.एल. का मर्जर एन.आई.एन.एल. के साथ चाहते हैं, नीलांचल इस्पात निगम लिमिटेड के साथ चाहते हैं। लेकिन नीलांचल इस्पात निगम लि. उड़ीसा सरकार के अंतर्गत है। उड़ीसा सरकार और एन.आई.एन.एल. अपना मर्जर सेल के साथ चाहती है। जब तक राज्य सरकार तैयार नहीं होगी और आर.आई.एन.एल. तैयार नहीं है, मैं समझता हूं कि इस संबंध में विचार नहीं किया जा सकता है।

Impact of Patent Laws on pharma sector

*185. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:†
SHRI HARISH RAWAT

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have assessed the impact of recent Patent Laws on the restructuring of pharma sector in the country;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) if so, whether such restructuring would cause the closure of some units;

(d) if so, what will be the extent of unemployment due to closure of units; and

(e) what steps are being taken to absorb the skilled manpower of the closed units?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (e) India is a signatory to the agreement establishing the World Trade Organisation. The WTO Agreement, *inter-alia*, contains an

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri K.B. Krishna Murthy.